

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Request for Continued Examination

A request for continued examination is enclosed with this amendment to remove the finality of the office action mailed on March 30, 2005.

Claim Status

Claims 31-62 are pending and amended.

Claim Rejections

Claims 31-62 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over the admitted prior art, Fuchida et al. (US 5,723,908) ("Fuchida") and Aoyama (US 6,559,483). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and submits that claims 31-62, as amended, are not rendered obvious by the cited references.

The present invention is characterized by the relationships between the intervals of the signal lines and the electrical fields generated between the signal lines. To be more specific, the maximal value of the voltage generated between the third and fourth lines, which are away from each other by the second interval, is greater than the maximal value of the voltage generated between the first and second lines, which are away from each other by the first interval (claim 31). Likewise, the maximal value of the voltage generated between the first and third lines, which are away from each other by the second interval, is greater than the maximal value of the voltage generated between the first and second lines, which are away from each other by the first interval (claims 41 and 55).

As a direct result of these features, the present invention prevents short-circuiting between the signal lines, and enhances the reliability of the LSI (NAND flash memory).

The Action rejects claims 31-62 in reliance on the admitted prior art in combination with Fuchida. In Fuchida, however, lines 2a arranged at pitch Sg1 and lines 2b arranged at pitch Sg2 are both power/ground lines. Thus, Fuchida is

directed to use of power/ground lines and its object is to attain a high-speed operation by providing low-capacitance wiring layers. The present invention, by contrast, is directed use of signal lines, and its object is to prevent short-circuiting between the signal lines. The present invention and Fuchida et al. are different from each other in light of the technologies to which they are directed and the objects they aim to attain. Fuchida clearly recognizes the difference between power/ground lines (2a, 2b) and signal lines (1a, 1b).


The Action's reliance on Fuchida for its teachings in connection with power/ground lines is improper since applicant's invention is directed to signal lines. In order to clarify this distinction, applicant has amended claims 31-62 to emphasize that they are directed to signal lines. In view thereof, the rejections of claims 31-62 under 35 USC 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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By: 
Troy M. Schmelzer
Registration No. 36,667
Attorney for Applicant(s)

500 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1900
Los Angeles, California 90071
Phone: 213-337-6700
Fax: 213-337-6701